

MPM

a bulletin on the doings and undoings of
Barbara Mertz/Elizabeth Peters/Barbara Michaels
Issue 47
Summer/Fall 2005
Kristen Whitbread, Editor

The Amelia Peabody Books By Elizabeth Peters

In chronological order:
Crocodile on the Sandbank
Curse of the Pharaohs
The Mummy Case
Lion in the Valley
Deeds of the Disturber
The Last Camel Died at Noon
The Snake, the Crocodile, and the Dog
The Hippopotamus Pool
Seeing a Large Cat
The Ape Who Guards the Balance
The Falcon at the Portal
He Shall Thunder in the Sky
Lord of the Silent
The Golden One
Children of the Storm
Guardian of the Horizon
Serpent on the Crown

also look for:

mpmbooks.com

MPM: Mertz ● Peters ● Michaels

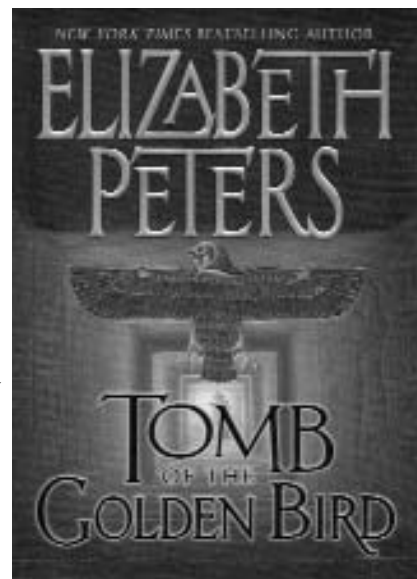
The official Barbara Mertz/Elizabeth Peters/Barbara Michaels website
by Margie Knauff & Lisa Speckhardt

PUBLISHING

The Tomb of the Golden Bird

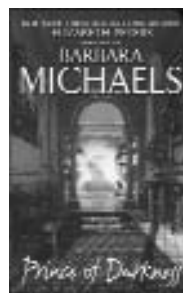
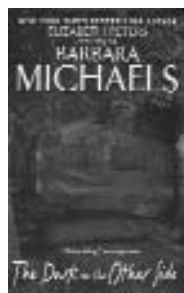
April 2006 hardcover William Morrow

The Serpent on the Crown March 2005 paperback Avon Suspense
Guardian of the Horizon March 2005 paperback Avon Suspense



HarperTorch Reissues Barbara Michaels:

The Dark on the other Side **Prince of Darkness** **The Sea King's Daughter**

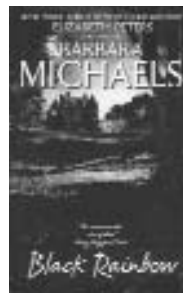
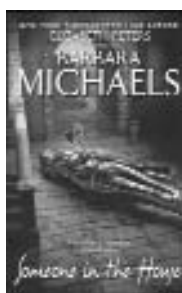


Someone in the House

Wings of the Falcon

Black Rainbow

Ammie Come Home



Speeches and fruit should always be fresh.

Nikki Giovanni

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

The exhibition "Excavating Egypt: Great Discoveries from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology" is touring the United States and one of its venues is the Michael C Carlos Museum:
Sunday, October 2, Michael C Carlos Museum 4pm "A Conversation with Elizabeth Peters"
Emory University Tickets required and only available to
571 South Kilgo Circle members of the Carlos Museum or
Atlanta, Georgia 30322 Friends of Emory University Libraries
Call 404 727-0519 for membership and tickets
<http://carlos.emory.edu/COLLECTION>

The treasure dug up is not gold, but history.

Petrie, 1886

THE PETRIE MUSEUM: A WORLD CLASS COLLECTION THAT NEEDS OUR HELP Jan Picton
(MPM hopes you will join her in supporting this very important effort.)

As any reader of Amelia Peabody's journals recognizes:

If the name of any one man must be associated with modern excavation as the chief begetter of its principles and methods, it must be the name of Professor Sir W.M. Flinders Petrie. It was he...who first called the attention of modern excavators to the importance of 'unconsidered trifles' as means for the construction of the past...the broken earthenware of a people may be of far greater value than its most gigantic monuments.

(Baikie, *A Century of Excavation in the Land of the Pharaohs*)

In the back yard of one of the world's great universities, University College London, if you enter the two rooms over a boiler house that were once the stables of a furniture manufactory you will discover one of the world's greatest collections of Egyptian objects - the true 'treasures' excavated by William Matthew Flinders Petrie. Welcome to The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology.

The Petrie Museum is full of spectacular artifacts, which further stand as testimony to Petrie's belief in practical learning. The author and journalist Amelia Edwards bequeathed her collection of antiquities to UCL to which Petrie added his own, as the basis for a working museum and teaching collection. The 80,000 objects, many from documented excavations, cover every period of life in the Nile Valley. In addition, the collection is full of 'firsts': the first known monumental sculpture; a fragment of the first calendar; the oldest gynaecological papyrus, and some of the earliest metal and linen found in Egypt. The museum also houses a substantial archive of notebooks, diaries, correspondence, photographs and historic watercolours relating to the collection. A fully-illustrated catalogue of the entire collection is now searchable on the museum's website (www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk). Further online resources include Digital Egypt for Universities, a 3000-page website setting the collections in context (www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk).

The collection desperately needs a new home. On its current site structural problems such as leaks in the roof, lack of environmental controls and blocked drains have caused serious damage to the collection in the past and continue to threaten its preservation. There is now an opportunity to re-house the museum in a purpose-built space. The dramatic new galleries will be designed to encourage debate and discussion. Visitors will be able to see conservation, research and teaching taking place, through windows in the displays, with talks and demonstrations as befits a university museum. The Petrie Museum needs your help to make these plans a reality; to share the treasure - and the learning - that is Petrie's legacy.

If you can help the museum please contact:

Sally MacDonald, Director, Petrie Museum, UCL, Malet Place, London WC1E 6BT. Telephone +44 20 7679 2825 (fax 2886). Email:sally.macdonald@ucl.ac.uk. There are naming opportunities associated with substantial donations, but all help, whatever the size of the donation, will make a huge difference to the future of an internationally important collection. (US supporters can make tax deductible gifts through University College London Friends and Alumni Association, UCLFAA Inc).For more information about the museum and how to visit see www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk or send for a brochure. For information about the work of the Friends of the Petrie Museum, visit their website: www.ucl.ac.uk/FriendsofPetrie.com

Jan Picton

Secretary, Friends of the Petrie Museum (Friends Voicemail: 020 7679 2369)

H.R.A. Institute of Archaeology, UCL., Sessional lecturer, Egypt and the Ancient Near East

For the full version of this article accompanied by photos log on to www.mpmbooks.com

Politeness may be nothing but veneering, but a veneered slab has the advantage of being without splinters.

Mary Wilson Little, A Paragrapher 's Reveries

MPM

Many thanks for the nice notes you sent with your requests to renew your newsletter subscriptions. Some of you offered to send money, but we don't want that; your appreciation is reward enough.

In case you wonder why we cull the list from time to time, it's because bulk mail isn't returned or forwarded. Some people neglect to notify us of changes of address and others prefer to read the newsletter online. The newsletter is a joint enterprise, and although Kristen is too modest to say so, I think it is one of the best.

Most of the letters I receive cause me to purr and preen myself. But a few, I admit, put me on the defensive. We pride ourselves on our accuracy. Kristen and I spend hours checking out such arcane subjects as medical education for women and the origin of the safety razor. But we don't claim (or aspire) to be experts on every possible subject. We make mistakes now and then. We don't mind being reminded of this unpalatable fact, but unless the mistake is more than a momentary lapse we really don't give a curse.

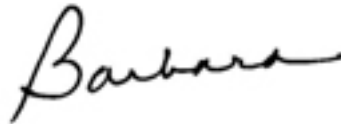
A particular type of letter that makes me walk around the house talking to myself is the one that essentially complains because I haven't written a different book. Please, for the sake of Kristen's nerves, spare me comments such as "I wish you'd keep Amelia and Emerson from getting older," or "Can't you get rid of those obnoxious children?" or "Why wasn't David in this book?" One man's meat is another man's poison, as Amelia would say; the characters you dislike are adored by other readers, and vice versa. I can't use all your favorite characters in every book; there are too many of them. Their presence or absence is dictated by the exigencies of the plot. Unlike some mystery series, which are more or less static, time passes in mine. The characters must age. Can you imagine Ramses remaining ten years old through World War I and the discovery of Tutankhamon's tomb? (KDW: Can you imagine Amelia's nerves with a forever-young Ramses? She would have been institutionalized long since!)

I enjoy the letters from young people who want to be writers and/or Egyptologists and I'm flattered that sometimes they choose to consult me; however, it's been over fifty years (God help me!) since I studied Egyptology and for obvious reasons I'm not up to date on current requirements. It's been almost that long since I had to find an agent or a publisher. While I cannot offer any useful advice on either of these careers, writing or archaeology, I always suggest that these questioners do their research at libraries, in

specialized periodicals such as KMT and The Writer, through the departments at their local university or college, and on the internet. Such research takes time and effort, an excellent beginning to pursuing either of these most demanding of professions!

As for questions which deal with how to write. I don't know how. I just do it. If there are tricks and shortcuts, I wish someone would tell me what they are! Unfortunately, as no one has seen fit to do so, I will return now to writing **Tomb of the Golden Bird...**

Best wishes to all my correspondents and good luck in all of your endeavors, whatever they might be!



I want books written out of a brain and heart and soul crowded and vital with Life, spelled with a big L. I want poetry bursting with passion. I don't care a hang for the "verbal felicities." They'll do for the fringe, but I want the garment to warm me first.

Gertrude Atherton, *The Aristocrats*

From Carol Zanoni: In discussing **Serpent**, several of us from the amelia@yahoogroups.com were profoundly disappointed to read that Ramses violated his promise to Nefret. With deliberation, he did not tell Nefret he was going to meet with Harriett - in her hotel room. Yet, he kept his promise to Harriett not to tell anyone. His omission exposed Nefret to public embarrassment and ridicule, and he knew it. Ramses behaved as a less than chivalrous and devoted spouse, uncharacteristic of him. Additionally, Nefret responded uncharacteristically. We expected her to be justifiably angry because of the potential danger to him; yet, she merely laughed.

MPM As Amelia's journals make clear, Ramses is no Sir Galahad (a boring character, in my opinion) but a man with normal urges and weaknesses. He's never even been tempted to be unfaithful to his wife, however, and she knows that. Like a sensible and loving wife she doesn't take his occasional misdemeanors seriously.

From Adele Graham: We would love to hear your opinion of Joann Fletcher's theories about Nefertiti, the murder of King Tutankhamen and other shockers from the tabloid TV school of Egyptology.

MPM In a nutshell - Fletcher is wrong, and I've never believed Tutankhamon was murdered. (Turns out he didn't have a hole in his cranium, which I have maintained all along. Ha!)

From Shawna McAllister: Do Emerson's views on the body in KV55 reflect your own or just the opinion of the times? There is also a really interesting theory...that Smenkhare and Nefertiti were one and the same..... Akhenaton was completely devoted to his wife, so it

doesn't make sense that she fell out of favor. She vanishes halfway through his reign... then Smenkhare shows up, full of Akhenaten's favor, and gets handed Nefertiti's throne name. There's supposedly a statue that shows them kissing, but I've also heard that it's supposed to be Akhenaten and one of his daughters.

MPM I've always believed (like Emerson) that the body in KV55 was Smenkhare (see **Temples, Tombs and Hieroglyphs**). Some evidence suggests that Nefertiti was Akhenaton's coregent, under a male name, but that is unproven. I do not believe she and Smenkhare were one and the same. The statue to which you refer was interpreted as (oh, horror!) evidence of a homosexual relationship by prurient Victorian scholars. This idea has been discarded.

From Chris Wallace: I read a quotation from Canadian Suffragette and writer Nellie McClung "I have come to realize one person cannot turn the world upside down, but we can give it a few whacks on the right side." I thought there should be a parasol involved.

MPM Amelia would certainly agree with that quote.

Also from Chris Wallace: Just who did journalist Kevin O'Connell marry? After all those blighted romances, I am awfully curious.

MPM Kevin's nuptials occurred during one of the "lost years," which I may get around to editing one day. I assure you, he's very happy.

From Lynne Matheny: Is it Charla or Carla? In **Children of the Storm**, the twin is called "Charla." In **Serpent on the Crown**, she is "Carla". Just wondering-

KDW One of many asking this question... I'm sure the Emersons adjusted nicknames from year to year as parents and grandparents are wont to do. My own children's names have gone through upwards of a dozen or more incarnations over the years. I suppose Ms. Peters, the editor of Mrs. Emerson's journals, overlooked the opportunity to footnote this change.¹

¹Although footnotes do give the impression of pomposity, don't you think?

Sue Fellman Jacob echoes a familiar refrain: I'm an avid reader of your Amelia Peabody stories, but I do miss the Vicki Bliss series. Any hope you might do one of those?!

MPM I'd like to do another Vicky some day, but the decision rests in part on my publisher. Stay tuned!

Diplomacy

I have decided to enjoy dandelions,
to retract those hurtful things I used to say
about their bumptious habits,
how they rode roughshod
over my gentler plants,
harboured slugs, flattened grass and enticed
spongy moss across the lawn.

I persecuted them with zeal,
tearing them from their roots.
They were friends of my enemies,
that was sufficient vindication.

But now the ground itself grows distant,
gravity and years have forced a change of heart.
This year I will enjoy the splendour
of their carpeting of gold, glinting
through the growing plants,
concealing beds and paths.

Even their destructive seeds, that spread
contagion over field and garden,
I will welcome for the charm of finches
that they bring.

This year I will accept all dandelions
as neighbours, and learn to love them.
Next year if I am stronger
we may carry on the fight.

Edna Eglinton 2004 (Thank you, Ms. Eglinton, for the permission to reprint)

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